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Chairman: Mr. Niculescu ..... (Romania)

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00-73351 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 93: Sectoral policy questions (*continued*) (A/C.2/55/L.22)

(a) Industrial development cooperation (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.22

1. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.22, entitled "Industrial development cooperation" and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

Agenda item 95: Environment and sustainable development (*continued*) (A/C.2/55/L.20, L.21 and L.23)

(b) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.20

2. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced resolution A/C.2/55/L.20, entitled "Convention on Biological Diversity". He drew attention, in particular, to paragraph 7, whereby the developed countries were urged to facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound biotechnology for effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol, and paragraph 8, which called for the proclamation of 22 May as the International Day for Biological Diversity.

(d) Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.21

3. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.21, entitled "Further implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States". He drew particular attention to paragraphs 3 and 5, and to paragraph 6, which urged all relevant organizations to finalize, as a matter of urgency, the work on the development of a vulnerability index for small island developing States.

(g) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.23

4. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.23, entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind" and drew attention to paragraphs 2, 6 and 7.

Agenda item 97: Training and research (*continued*) (A/C.2/55/L.24)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.24

5. **Mr. Kawaguchi** (Japan) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.24, entitled "United Nations University", on behalf of the co-sponsors listed in the document and also Fiji, Georgia, Germany, Haiti, Iceland, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Latvia, Malta, Norway, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey and Zambia. He drew particular attention to paragraphs 8, 9, 10 and 11, saying that the United Nations University was even more relevant now than when it had been established 25 years earlier. His Government would continue to provide active support to the University in the hope that it would maintain its distinctive identify.

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/55/3 and A/55/419)

6. **Mr. Civili** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs), introducing the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/55/3), said that it was no longer relevant to speak of the Council's revitalization but rather that the focus should now be on its strengthening. The emphasis placed, at the Millennium Summit, on poverty eradication and ensuring that globalization benefited all, had given the Council new and much greater recognition. In that connection, he acknowledged the effective leadership of the Council President, Mr. Wibisono, both in breaking new ground and consolidating the achievements of the past few years. Examples of ground-breaking initiatives had been the Council's meeting with the President of the Security Council on the implications of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its emergency meeting to deal with the devastating floods in Mozambique. The Council had consolidated its role as a forum for meetings between representatives of the United Nations and the

international financial and trade institutions by its special high-level meeting in April with the Bretton Woods institutions; the one-day policy dialogue at the opening of the substantive session in July, had built on the outcome of the meeting and had focused on the digital divide and the role of information and communications technology (ICT) in development.

7. Discussions at the high-level segment, which had been devoted to the theme "Development of international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy" had increased awareness of the potential of information and communication technology for development. The ministerial declaration adopted at the end of the segment contained an action plan to harness information and communication technology for development and improve developing countries' access to ICT. All regions and key development actors, including the private sector, had been involved in the preparations for the substantive session and in the high-level segment itself. The result had been genuine consensus-building and sustained and participatory follow-up. In addition, following the Millennium Summit, the Council had called for the establishment of a task force to increase the digital opportunities of the developing countries and help them formulate national ICT for development programmes. The Secretary-General was currently holding consultations on the composition, terms of reference and working methods of the task force.

8. The work of the Council's coordination segment had led to significant advances in the coordination of the follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s. The Council had invited its functional commissions to ensure that intergovernmental reviews of the conferences and summits resulted in mutually reinforcing outcomes. The Council would consider the question again in 2001. The segment had also given impetus to the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

9. At its operational activities segment, the Council had expressed concern at the insufficiency of core funding for operational activities for development and made proposals to reverse that trend. It had also identified a number of issues for the next triennial policy review for operational activities for development, including a review of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), impact evaluations of operational activities and cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions. The humanitarian affairs segment had emphasized the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance and the role of technology in mitigating the impact of human emergencies and the related displacements of persons. In the general segment, the Council had considered a whole range of reports aimed at providing some common direction to the work of the Council's system, adopted a number of resolutions and established the United Nations Forum on Forests as a subsidiary body.

10. One highly significant aspect of the Council's work was its growing role as a forum for representatives of governments, the United Nations system and civil society to discuss operational and policy issues crucial to development. The Council and its Bureau were preparing for a spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions. The theme of its high-level segment in 2001 would be "The role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development"; its coordination segment would focus on the role of the United Nations in the area of knowledge and technology through partnership with relevant stakeholders. In conclusion, he believed that the Council could further improve its methods of work by phasing segments and meetings with a view to maximizing participation in them as well as its own capacity for timely responses, and further sharpening the focus of the general segment, with support from the Secretariat.

11. **Mr. Doutriaux** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey, and, in addition, Iceland, said that the European Union attached great importance to the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council and welcomed the progress achieved in strengthening the Council's coordinating role, although much remained to be done in that regard. Stronger ties with the Bretton Woods institutions were vital; the European Union therefore welcomed the Council's increased cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions through, inter alia, the now traditional special high-

level meeting held in April. It hoped that the financing for development process would further strengthen that trend and also that the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization would participate actively in the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

12. The substantive session of July had also been a success; the European Union welcomed, in particular, the extensive participation of the private sector and the innovations introduced by the President of the Council, such as the information technology exhibit and thematic breakfasts, which had paved the way for additional partnerships. The ministerial declaration and the proposal to establish an ICT task force testified is a genuine determination to achieve concrete results were praiseworthy. The European Union hoped that the outcome of the next high-level segment devoted to Africa would be equally tangible.

13. He expressed the Union's satisfaction at the coordination segment, although some overall guidelines should have been established with regard to the follow-up to the major United Nations conferences. Fortunately, the agreed conclusions assured the continuation of dialogue in that area, which should be informed by an awareness of the close linkage between the integrated and coordinated follow-up of the major conferences and summits and the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The European Union had been pleased with the operational activities for development segment and the adoption of two resolutions by consensus. It hoped that the next triennial policy review of operational activities for development would take place in a constructive atmosphere. The failure to adopt agreed conclusions in the humanitarian segment was regrettable, particularly since the victims of natural disasters and populations displacements needed protection and assistance. The many organizational changes introduced, including panels, were encouraging, however.

14. The European Union was dissatisfied with certain aspects of the organization of the most recent substantive session, particularly delays in the distribution and/or translation of documents and the lack of interpretation during negotiations. It called on the Secretariat and the Bureau to ensure that such problems did not recur.

15. **Mr. Anaedu** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that they attached great importance to the revitalization of the Council and welcomed the proposal made at the high-level segment, to create an ICT task force. Access to and use of the Internet would be invaluable to developing countries in combating developmental problems, particularly poverty. While the other segments of the substantive session had also been impressive, it was regrettable that no agreed conclusions had been reached in the humanitarian affairs segment.

16. The Group of 77 and China appreciated the themes selected for the coordination and high-level segments of 2001 and was pleased that the need to augment core resources for operational activities for development was now acknowledged. While it was understandable that agreed conclusions could not be reached on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development, the Group of 77 and China hoped for a more positive outcome later on. In conclusion, he thanked the President of the Council for the unique improvements he had made in the work of the Council, particularly with regard to the strengthening of the ties between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions.

17. **Mr. Liu** Jingtao (China) welcomed the Council's implementation of reform measures leading to its revitalization and increased efficiency. In particular, he welcomed the recent discussions on the role of information technology in helping the developing countries integrate in the world economy. He expressed appreciation to the President of the Council and the Bureau for their creative innovations and said that consolidation of the Council's achievements should be a priority task.

18. It was incumbent on Member States to curb the decrease in support for development and promote the development goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. His delegation attached great importance to participation by non-governmental organizations in national follow-up to the major global conferences and summits.

19. Indicators were a useful means of gauging progress in the implementation of the major global conferences; however, United Nations agencies should harmonize their approach so that Member States would not have to submit different sets of statistics to different agencies. The agencies should also help build Member States' capacities to collect and analyse statistics. In that connection, his delegation supported

the agencies' current practice of making specific requests for indicators on the basis of the programme of action of the conference or summit concerned.

20. **Mr. Mazhukhou** (Belarus) noted the growing role of the Council as a forum for meetings between representatives of the United Nations and the international financial and trade institutions, as well as specialized agencies, to enhance the dialogue on development, and he referred in that connection to the Council's recent special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions.

21. There were a number of issues he wished to highlight in connection with the Council's future work. Firstly, creation of a favourable internal and external environment for development should remain the main goal of the dialogue. Secondly, financing for development and the new round of the World Trade Organization multilateral negotiations should be among the priority issues for future dialogue with the heads of the financial and trade and economic organizations. That, however, did not preclude consideration of other questions linked to the achievement of greater coordination and mutual complementarity of the aims of global, regional and national policies and practices in resolving, with the participation of the United Nations, the economic, financial, trade and other problems of development, and especially the functioning of the international trading and financial system in conditions of information and communication integration. In that context, Belarus supported the conclusion contained in the consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (E/2000/85) that there appeared to be a need to move towards a more detailed analysis of the impact of globalization and of trade and finance in the specific area addressed by the functional commissions. In the view of Belarus it was also an issue to be dealt with by the regional commissions.

22. The regional aspects of managing the processes of globalization would become increasingly important, including in the work of the Council. Belarus welcomed the themes selected for the high-level and coordination segments of the substantive session in 2001.

23. The recent meeting devoted to the fight against hunger and the provision of food security, organized by the Council, with the executive heads of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme had been a good example of the new partnership between the agencies of the United Nations system and Government and other international partners to achieve the aims set out in the Millennium Declaration.

24. His delegation supported the continued diversification of cooperation between the Council, the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO, UNCTAD, the regional commissions and the development banks. Such cooperation could form part of the preparations for the international intergovernmental high-level event in 2001 devoted to financing for development. It was also extremely important for consensus to be reached on an international development strategy for the first decade of the new millennium.

25. The triennial review of operational activities for development should emphasize the importance of observing the principles of universality, neutrality and a multilateral approach, ensuring high-quality services and effectiveness of programme activity on the basis of a guaranteed minimum of basic resources and greater predictability of additional resources, as well as an increasing share of co-financed projects and programmes developed by Governments of interested countries and their partners.

26. Finally, in the context of strengthening relations between the main organs of the United Nations, special attention should be given to the recommendations of the Secretary-General regarding integrated examination by the General Assembly, in plenary session, of the annual reports of the Economic and Social Council, which would be presented by the President of the Council (E/2000/67), and the proposals of a number of Governments and representatives of civil society regarding the strengthening of links and cooperation between that Council and the Security Council.

27. **Mr. Seki** (Japan) said that the decision regarding the establishment of an information, communication and technology task force within the United Nations represented a great leap forward and he hoped that the task force would adequately coordinate the efforts being made within the United Nations system to bridge the digital divide and to bring about a world in which everyone would benefit from digital opportunity.

28. With regard to the coordination segment, he said that, while it was a pity that agreement had not been reached on concrete measures to improve the way in

which review meetings on the implementation of major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s were conducted, headway had been made in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the follow-up to those conferences and summits, and it was to be hoped that the issue would continue to be discussed and that tangible progress would be made at the substantive session of the Council in 2001.

29. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution on the International Year of Volunteers in 2001; it also welcomed the adoption by the Council, at its resumed session, of the draft resolution on the establishment of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

30. **Mr. Reshetniak** (Ukraine) welcomed the growing cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions, as reflected in the special high-level meeting held in April. His delegation also welcomed the outcome of the substantive session of the Council held in July, particularly its high-level segment on the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy, which confirmed the Council's ability to identify and consider issues of key importance to economic growth and human development on a global scale. His delegation supported the basic conclusions of the high-level segment, as contained in the ministerial declaration, particularly the stress on the need for effective and meaningful collaborative efforts, involving Governments, multilateral institutions and the private sector, aimed at enhancing the impact of ICT in promoting sustainable development in developing countries and economies in transition as well as facilitating their integration into the global economy. Nonetheless, a more concrete and result-oriented outcome of the high-level segment would have been preferable to one of a general nature.

31. His delegation supported the agreed conclusions of the coordination segment, which would provide guidance to the United Nations system on ensuring an effective and comprehensive review of the progress achieved in follow-up to the major global conferences and summits. He commended the work of the general segment on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's functional and regional commissions and its subsidiary bodies, and of economic assistance of the international community and the United Nations system to States affected by Security Council sanctions regimes. At the same time, however, there was a need to rationalize the agenda of the general segment, and for continued improvement of the Council's methods of work.

Announcement concerning sponsorship of draft resolutions

32. **The Chairman** said that Bulgaria, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia wished to become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.19.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.